

# Department for Education

## External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

### Report for West Beach Primary School

Conducted in November 2019



## Review details

Our education system aspires to become the best in Australia by seeking growth for every student, in every class and in every school.

The purpose of the External School Review (ESR) is to support schools to raise achievement, sustain high performance and to provide quality assurance to build and sustain public confidence in government schools.

The External School Review framework is referenced throughout all stages of the ESR process.

This report outlines aspects of the school's performance verified through the review process according to the framework. It does not document every aspect of the school's processes, programs and outcomes.

We acknowledge the support and cooperation provided by the staff and school community. While, not all review processes, artefacts and comments are documented, they all have been considered and contributed to the development and directions of this report.

This review was conducted by Debbie Grzczkowski, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Vicki Stravinski, Review Principal.

## Review Process

The following processes were used to gather evidence relating to the lines of inquiry:

- Presentation from the principal
- Class visits
- Attendance at staff meeting
- Document analysis
- Scan of Aboriginal Education Strategy implementation
- Discussions with:
  - Governing Council representatives
  - Leaders
  - Parent groups
  - School Services Officers (SSOs)
  - Student groups
  - Teachers

## School context

West Beach Primary School caters for children from reception to year 7. It is situated 8kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 338 students. Enrolment is increasing over the last 5 years. The enrolment at the time of the previous review was 240.

The school has an ICSEA score of 1050, and is classified as Category 6 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage. The local partnership is Western Adelaide Shores.

The school population includes 1% Aboriginal students, 6% students with disabilities, 23% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 3 children/young people in care, and 10% of families eligible for School Card assistance. The school hosts an area primary special class.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in the first year of their tenure at the school. The school has a deputy principal and a student wellbeing coordinator.

There are 16 teachers including 1 in the early years of their career and 7 step 9 teachers.

## Previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1**     **Develop agreed expectations of what teachers need to do to support students at each level of schooling to demonstrate rigorous and deeper learning.**
- Direction 2**     **To support students not meeting the Standard of Educational Achievement in Running Records, investigate current assessment and instructional practices.**
- Direction 3**     **Identify and enact consistent practices and ensure the learning activities are personalised in reading to meet individual students' assessed needs.**
- Direction 4**     **Strengthen pedagogical practices which contribute to greater authentic student influence in their learning.**

### What impact has the implementation of previous directions had on school improvement?

The previous directions have guided the school improvement agenda since the last review with a narrow focus on literacy and numeracy. Significant professional learning has been a feature at the school in the last three years, with all staff accessing professional learning linked to the directions. Whole-staff engagement with two external providers in maths and literacy has built teacher capacity and understanding. The upskilling of staff has enabled the school to look at utilising the expertise within the school and appoint coaches to work with staff to further refine their practice.

The formation of learning teams provided a platform for teachers to work collaboratively and develop pedagogical approaches to student learning. Work on the previous directions also enabled the school to collect and interrogate data as part of whole-school practice. The increased interrogation of data has enabled students to be identified and supported through evidence-based interventions.

The impact of the previous directions is evidenced in improved NAPLAN outcomes, particularly in higher band achievement.

## Lines of inquiry

### EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

#### *How effectively does the school use improvement planning processes to raise student achievement?*

The panel found that all teachers are engaging with a wide range of achievement and growth data. Leadership have aligned staff meeting structures to facilitate the opportunity for staff to meet regularly in learning teams and interrogate data as part of ongoing practice. Data drives intervention delivered through a mixture of evidence-based programs and SSO support.

Staff collectively engaged in the creation of the current Site Improvement Plan (SIP) through reviewing and analysing a range of data. Teaching staff have self-assessed their practice against the SIP as part of their learning team's cycle of monitoring and review. Performance and development plans (PDPs) are linked to the SIP for both teachers and support staff with professional learning supporting the plans goals.

The panel evidenced pockets of effective teacher practice but found variance across classes and learning teams. There are several high impact strategies deployed by teachers which are currently not being shared as there are limited structures for each learning team to share their practice with other teams. Developing clear structures and process which enable staff to share and connect their practice will help drive and support the improvement agenda. Working collaboratively to create and publish guiding documents outlining agreed, evidence-based practices will build a whole-school approach and further support student learning outcomes.

Whilst all staff have a PDP plan, the panel found that the processes to enact performance development were not rigorously followed with most staff still awaiting their second meeting. Use of the AITSL teacher standards and the inclusion of individual student data will further support PDP conversations. Leaders have the opportunity to lead the learning at West Beach Primary School through strengthening the processes and structures to further build staff capacity and promote consistency through intentional performance development, supported by a cycle of focused observations with feedback. Monitoring and observing teacher practice, explicitly linked to the narrow focus of the SIP, in conjunction with the school's proposed coaching model, will provide rigour and support a cycle of continuous improvement which positively impacts on classroom practice.

**Direction 1 Build coherence and further refine teacher practice by developing processes to provide a cycle of focused observations to deliver on SIP success criteria.**

## EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

### *How effectively are teachers using evidence-based pedagogical practices that engage and challenge all learners?*

The panel evidenced that teachers have a good understanding of the Australian Curriculum with most teachers using pre-assessment to refine planning and post-assessment to track student growth. All staff track data to identify students but the panel found variance in how this was being used to inform student learning as differentiated lessons were not evidenced as consistent practice. Staff interrogated PAT data and created math units of work based on gaps in learning and used structured intervention groups to address individual needs. Most students are aware of their reading level but the panel found little evidence of explicit individual learning goals across all classes, or ownership of their personal data.

Students are able to articulate their learning with the majority of students reporting engagement and enjoyment of lessons. All identified students have a current individual learning plan to support and direct their learning. SSOs deliver a mix of class and group support as well as providing quality, evidenced-based intervention.

Half of students, with whom the panel spoke, indicated that their work was 'too easy' and felt they needed to be challenged and given harder work to push and stretch their learning. Bookwork cited during the review also identified the opportunity to strengthen access for students to achieve in the upper bands.

Some teachers use targeted and timely formative assessment to help students refine their work and there is opportunity to make this more consistent in all classes. The panel observed several books which had not been marked and students reporting little or no feedback on their work. The panel felt that increased opportunities to refocus on learning design and outcomes would enable increased rigour with stretch and challenge for all students to become routine practice. Teachers highlighted differentiation and stretch and challenge as an area for further support. Supporting staff through focused observations and a strategic coaching model would further strengthen capacity.

**Direction 2 For all students to receive differentiated learning with appropriate stretch and challenge, strengthen teachers' capacity in learning design, assessment and moderation.**

## EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

### *To what extent do teachers ensure that students have authentic influence in their learning?*

The panel evidenced some students using learning design to co-construct their learning and create self-assessment rubrics to guide their work, with some of these students also having the opportunity to access the Australian Curriculum and identify areas covered in their work.

Most students had recently completed an assessment scan on learning dispositions and provided feedback to teachers. Students appreciated the opportunity to provide feedback and reflected that they would like this to happen more regularly.

Although students feel strongly connected to adults at West Beach Primary School, they report having little voice in their learning or the running of the school. A Student Representative Council (SRC) is not currently occurring which has resulted in students feeling disempowered. The panel evidenced a vibrant student community who would like input into their school. Several students have been asked to attend a student voice forum which they valued and enabled a sense of leadership. The panel felt there is opportunity to further explore student leadership across the school.

The majority of students, with whom the panel spoke, felt they could have increased influence in their learning. Students talked of being presented with choices in lessons but these were always teacher driven. The panel found student ownership of learning was limited. Most students did not have explicit individual learning goals to provide their next steps in learning. The panel evidenced some classes where students were provided with clear success criteria. Some teachers were also providing quality feedback as routine practice but this was not consistently evidenced across the school. The panel found there was an opportunity for staff to review formative assessment processes to provide targeted and timely feedback to students to assist them to further improve their learning. Implementing and embedding processes which provide all students with regular opportunities to provide input into their learning will deepen their ownership and promotion of their sense of themselves as learners.

**Direction 3 Enable all students to monitor and assess their learning through ongoing conferencing to set individual learning goals, establish clear success criteria and receive targeted and timely feedback.**

## Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

West Beach Primary School has a welcoming atmosphere where staff, students and parents display a strong sense of pride in their school. Students enjoy being at school and are able to clearly articulate their learning. Staff and students maintain strong positive relationships with students and the wider community and parents reflect on the strong community nature of the school. Parents and governing council display a high level of trust in the school. There is a cohesive leadership team who support staff and students. Strong links with the Western Adelaide Shores partnership and West Beach Kindergarten further compliment outcomes at West Beach Primary School.

The principal will work with the education director to implement the following directions:

- Direction 1** Build coherence and further refine teacher practice by developing processes to provide a cycle of focused observations to deliver on SIP success criteria.
- Direction 2** For all students to receive differentiated learning with appropriate stretch and challenge, strengthen teachers' capacity in learning design, assessment and moderation.
- Direction 3** Enable all students to monitor and assess their learning through ongoing conferencing to set individual learning goals, establish clear success criteria and receive targeted and timely feedback.

Based on the school's current performance, West Beach Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2022.



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Andrew Wells  
A/DIRECTOR  
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND  
ACCOUNTABILITY



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Anne Millard  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
PARTNERSHIPS, SCHOOLS AND  
PRESCHOOLS

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Kevin Kennedy  
PRINCIPAL  
WEST BEACH PRIMARY SCHOOL

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GOVERNING COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON

# Appendix 1

## School performance overview

The External School Review process includes an analysis of school performance as measured against the Department for Education Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA).

### Reading

In the early years, reading progress is monitored against Running Records. In 2018, 78% of year 1 and 81% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents little or no change for year 1 and an improvement for year 2 from the historic baseline average.

In 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 84% of year 3 students, 91% of year 5 students and 86% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 7, this result represents little or no change, and for year 5 this represents an improvement, from the historic baseline average.

For 2019 year 3, 5, and 7 NAPLAN reading, the school is achieving within the results of similar students across government schools.

In 2019, 42% of year 3, 59% of year 5 and 36% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands. For year 3, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 71%, or 15 out of 21 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 75%, or 9 out of 12 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

### Numeracy

In 2019, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 82% of year 3 students, 83% of year 5 students and 93% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 5, this result represents little or no change, and for year 7 this represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

For 2019 year 3 and 5 NAPLAN numeracy, the school is achieving within, and for year 7 is achieving higher than the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2019, 20% of year 3, 35% of year 5 and 38% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 3, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 60%, or 9 out of 15 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 79%, or 7 out of 9 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.